

Listing of Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A customer self-checkout system for processing article purchases of articles ~~normally having a security tag attached thereto~~, the system comprising:
a self-checkout station comprising:
an input device configured to receive product code input designating an article for purchase;
a deactivation device configured to produce a deactivation region effecting deactivation of a security tag attached to an article for purchase; and
a prompting system configured to present a deactivation prompt to direct a user to position an article for purchase within the deactivation region to effect security tag deactivation, wherein the prompting system is configured to present the deactivation prompt after the receipt of the product code by the input device.
2. (currently amended) The system of claim 1 wherein the prompting system is configured to present an initial ~~a second~~ prompt directing a user to enter a product code using the input device.
3. (currently amended) The system of claim 2 further comprising:
a target visibly disposed proximate the deactivation region at the checkout station; and wherein the ~~second~~ deactivation prompt instructs the user to move the article to touch the target to effect security tag deactivation.
4. (cancelled)
5. (currently amended) The system of claim 1 ~~4~~ wherein the system further comprises:
a database system coupled to the self-checkout station and comprising stored data identifying articles having attached security tags and articles not having attached security tags;

a processor configured to receive product code input from the input device and to query the database to determine whether an article designated by said received product code input has an attached security tag; and wherein

the prompting system is configured to present the deactivation prompt when the article has an attached security tag and to not present the deactivation prompt when the article does not have an attached security tag.

6. (original) The system of claim 5 wherein the prompting system is further configured to present the deactivation prompt when the stored data associated with an article does not indicate whether said article has an attached security tag or not.
7. (original) The system of claim 1, further comprising a sensor for sensing the presence of an article within the deactivation region.
8. (original) The system of claim 7 further comprising:
a bagging platform comprising a scale operatively coupled to the prompting system and configured to detect weight of bagged articles; and wherein
the prompting system is configured to present the deactivation prompt when a weight change is detected by the bagging scale and the sensor has not sensed presence of the article within the deactivation region.
9. (currently amended) The system of claim 8 wherein the prompting system is configured to present a bagging prompt providing instructions to a user to place the article into a bag on the bagging platform.
10. (original) The system of claim 8 wherein the bagging platform further comprises a bag holder adapted to hold a bag for receiving articles.

11. (original) The system of claim 7 wherein the prompting system is configured to present a feedback prompt to confirm deactivation of the security tag after the sensor senses presence of an article within the deactivation region.
12. (original) The system of claim 11 wherein the feedback prompt comprises a prompt instructing the user to place the article in a bag.
13. (original) The system of claim 1 wherein the input device comprises a device selected from the group consisting of a bar code scanner, a scanner-scale module, a touch-screen display, and a keypad.
14. (currently amended) The system of claim 1 wherein the deactivation prompt comprises an animated prompt.
15. (currently amended) The system of claim 1, wherein the deactivation prompt is provided by an audio device.
16. (currently amended) A customer self-checkout system for processing article purchases of articles ~~normally having a security tag attached thereto~~, the system comprising:
a self-checkout station comprising:
 - an input device configured to receive product code input designating an article for purchase;
 - a deactivation device configured to produce a deactivation region effecting deactivation of a security tag attached to an article for purchase;
 - a sensor for sensing the presence of an article within the deactivation region;
 - a target visibly disposed proximate the deactivation region;
 - a bagging platform comprising a bag holder adapted to hold a bag for receiving articles and a scale operatively configured to detect weight of bagged articles;

a database system coupled to the self-checkout station and comprising stored data identifying articles having attached security tags and articles not having attached security tags;
a processor coupled to the input device, the sensor, the bagging platform and the database, and the processor being configured to receive product code input from the input device and to query the database to determine whether an article designated by received product code input has an attached security tag; and
a prompting system configured to present,
 a prompt directing a user to enter a product code using the input device;
 a first deactivation prompt to direct a user to position an article for purchase within the deactivation region to effect security tag deactivation when a database query determines that the article has an attached security tag and to not present the first deactivation prompt when the query determines that the article does not have an attached security tag, wherein the prompting system is configured to present the deactivation prompt after the receipt of the product code by the input device
 a second deactivation prompt when a weight change is detected by the bagging scale and the sensor has not sensed presence of the article within the deactivation region; and
 a feedback prompt to confirm deactivation of the security tag after the sensor senses presence of an article within the deactivation region.

17. (cancelled).

18. (cancelled).

19. (cancelled).

20. (cancelled).

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21. (cancelled).

22. (cancelled).

23. (cancelled).

24. (cancelled).

25. (cancelled).

26. (cancelled).

27. (cancelled).

28. (cancelled).